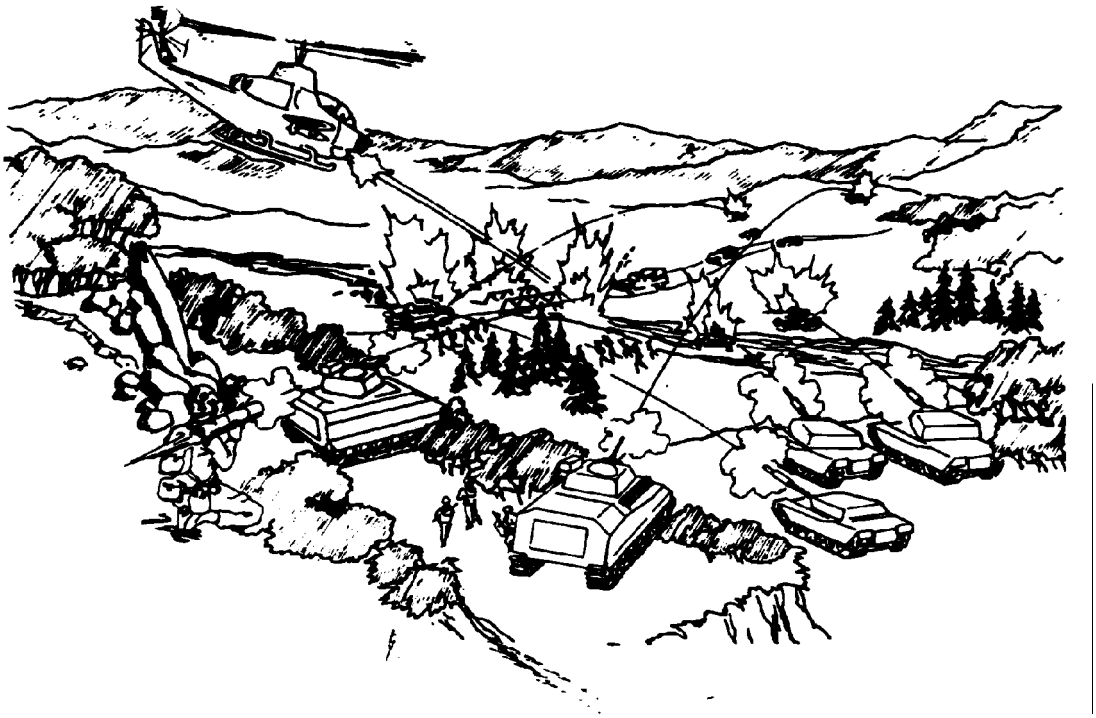
NEWSLETTER

No. 95-12 ***Update*** **MAY 97**

MILITARY DECISION MAKING:



"Abbreviated Planning"

CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED (CALL)
U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1350

This newsletter is an update of **CALL Newsletter 95-12,** ***Tactical Decision Making,*** **December 1995.** *Throughout 1996 and 1997,* **FM 101-5,** ***Staff Organization and Operations,*** *experienced numerous revisions which resulted in significant changes to the doctrinal Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). Additionally, units have continued to develop and refine TTPs as they apply the MDMP. Because of the numerous revisions of FM 101-5 and newly developed TTPs, CALL decided to revise the original document to more accurately reflect emerging doctrine, provide more detailed TTPs, and place more emphasis on continuous planning.*

PREFACE

All units that train at the Combat Training Centers (CTCs) want to do well and succeed. Historically, success at the CTCs is directly related to the unit's ability to execute the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). With today's technology and vast number of different systems involved, integration and synchronization are critical. Stability and Support Operations further complicate the issue. Without a well-developed, integrated, and synchronized plan, the likelihood of a unit being successful is significantly degraded. Producing such a plan that is simple and flexible is very difficult in a time-constrained environment.

Experience at the CTCs indicates that units often struggle with the MDMP when time is limited. Under these circumstances, units often omit steps of the MDMP. Most observer/controllers (O/Cs) at the CTCs agree that when time is limited, completely omitting any step or steps of the MDMP is not the solution and often degrades mission success.

This newsletter provides techniques and procedures units can implement to alleviate some of the common problems associated with the MDMP. This newsletter builds upon tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) already discussed in **CALL Newsletter 93-3, Jul 93,** ***The Battalion and Brigade Battle Staff,*** and **CALL Newsletter 95-7, May 95,** ***Tactical Operations Center (TOC).***

95-12 *Update** Military Decision Making

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine or feminine gender is used, both are intended.

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CHAPTER I
Decision-Making Overview

Most decision-making theories present some variation of a six-step process used by leaders and managers to make decisions. The basic **six-step process** is as follows:

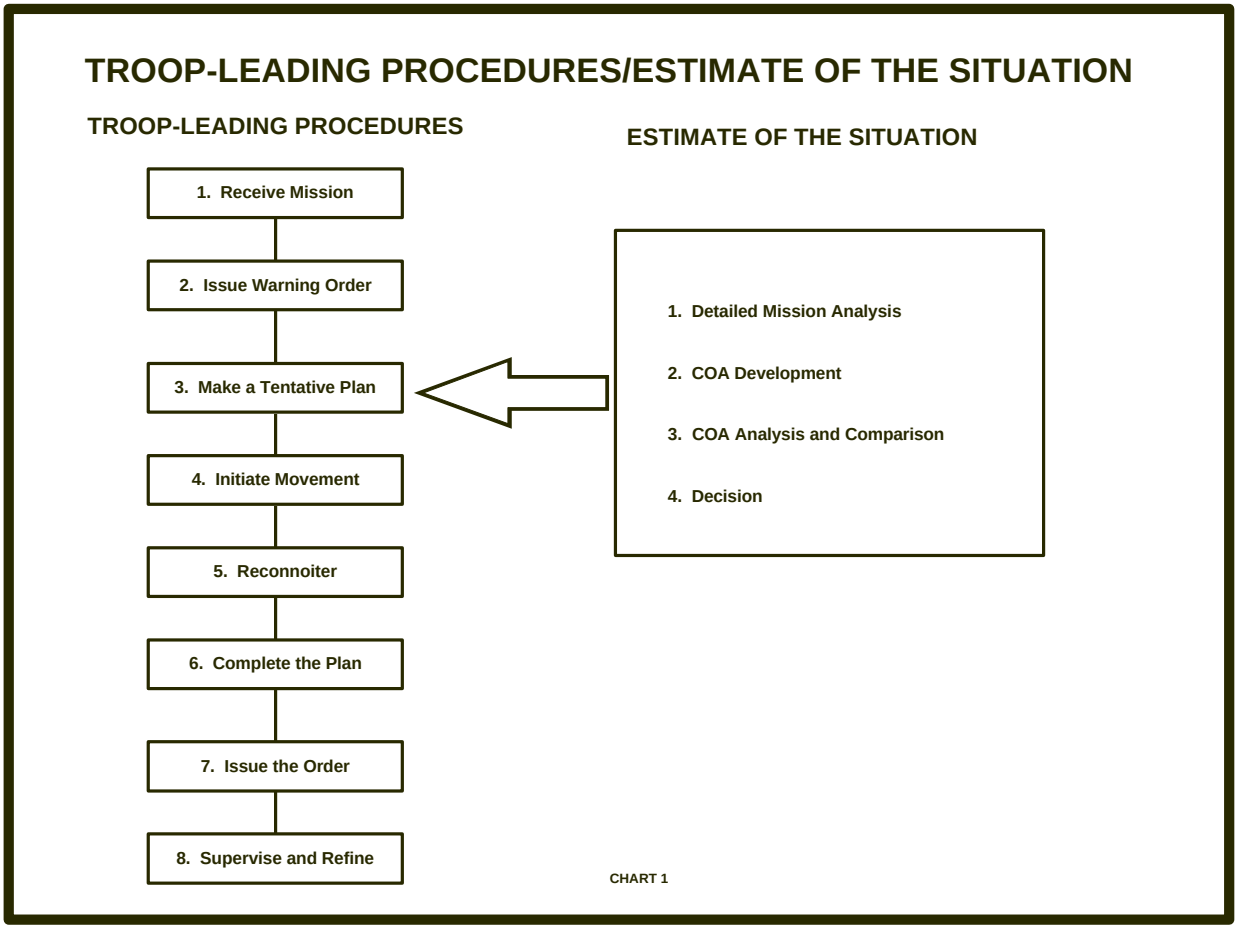
✔Define the problem.
✔Gather facts and assumptions.
✔Develop solutions.
✔Analyze each solution.
✔Compare solutions.
✔Select the solution that best addresses the problem.

In the tactical environment, this process is called the estimate of the situation. This is the process the commander and staff use to assist them in assessing the situation and making decisions. The estimate of the situation parallels the process outlined above using the following **four-step process:**

✔Mission analysis.
✔Course of action (COA) development.
✔COA analysis and comparison.
✔Decision.

The estimate of the situation is the model for all MDMPs. Chart 1 identifies how the estimate of the situation relates to the troop-leading procedures (Make a tentative plan). Each step of the process builds upon the previous steps. Any serious errors committed early will severely impact the planning process as it continues.

The planning process serves as a tool that assists the commander and staff in developing a plan. A single tool (planning process) used in all situations will not work. The right tool must be applied to the right situation. The abbreviated planning processes presented later in this newsletter follow the same basic model (estimate of the situation) as the MDMP, but employ slightly different techniques.


TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES/ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION
TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES
ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION
1. Receive Mission
2. Issue Warning Order
3. Make a Tentative Plan
4. Initiate Movement
5. Reconnoiter
6. Complete the Plan
7. Issue the Order
8. Supervise and Refine
1. Detailed Mission Analysis
2. COA Development
3. COA Analysis and Comparison
4. Decision
CHART 1

The formal MDMP as presented in FM 101-5 (DRAG Edition, 12 Feb. 97) is a very difficult and time consuming process. This deliberate step by step approach to the planning process will not work in time constrained environments. To alleviate this problem, FM 101-5 (DRAG Edition, 12 Feb. 97) presents an abbreviated form of the MDMP.

The most significant factor that units must consider when abbreviating the planning process is time. Time is the only nonrenewable resource and is often the most critical resource a unit must manage. Other distinguishing factors that must be considered when determining which planning process to use are:

- **✔Level of involvement of the commander.**
- **✔Availability and experience level of the staff.**
- **✔Staff flexibility and latitude.**
- **✔Number of friendly COAs developed.**
- **✔Sequential versus parallel planning.**

Chart 2 shows how the above factors affect the planning process.

MDMP PLANNING CONTINUUM

MDMP ⟷ ABBREVIATED MDMP

MORE----------AVAILABLE PLANNING TIME----------LESS

LESS----------LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT OF CDR----------MORE

MORE----------EXPERIENCE/AVAILABILITY OF STAFF----------LESS

MORE ----------FLEXIBILITY/LATITUDE OF STAFF----------LESS

MORE----------NUMBER OF COAs DEVELOPED----------FEWER

SEQUENTIAL----------TYPE OF PROCESS----------PARALLEL

CHART 2

Before a staff can successfully abbreviate the planning process, it must first understand and be capable of executing the deliberate MDMP. Once the staff can implement the formal process, it is then prepared to abbreviate the process. Units must develop and practice standing operating procedures (SOPs) that address and incorporate the above factors into their planning processes. Unit SOPs must specifically outline the differences between their deliberate and abbreviated planning processes. Most importantly, these SOPs must address the roles and responsibilities of each individual involved in the process, including NCOs and soldiers.

This newsletter reviews the deliberate MDMP and presents two abbreviated planning processes that units might consider using under different circumstances or time constraints. ***These are only two examples of how the process can be abbreviated. There are many other techniques that may also work. What is important and should be remembered are the TTPs that explain the factors listed on MDMP Planning Continuum Chart (see chart 2, previous page), and how they are orchestrated to abbreviate the planning process.*** There are no major differences between the two abbreviated processes presented and the deliberate MDMP.

This newsletter presents different techniques and procedures that can be applied in different situations. For clarity of examples, the terms deliberate, abbreviated, and accelerated will be referred to throughout this document. Most planning processes will occur in one of three scenarios. These scenarios are:

Unit has approximately 16-24 hours (or more) from receipt of order to order issue at battalion/brigade level. When these conditions apply, the deliberate technique seems most appropriate.

Unit has approximately 10-16 hours from receipt of order to order issue at battalion/brigade level. When these conditions apply, the abbreviated technique seems most appropriate.

Unit has 10 hours or less from receipt of order to order issue at battalion/brigade level. When these conditions apply, the accelerated technique seems most appropriate.

These times are approximate, and are only intended to serve as a guide. Unit experience, personality of the commander, level of training, and complexity of the assigned mission ultimately determine which process to use under specific time constraints.

The three planning techniques listed above are not mutually exclusive. When planning for an operation, you may use more than one of

the techniques listed. You may initially develop your plan using the deliberate or abbreviated technique. As information becomes available and the situation changes, you may have to make adjustments to your plan using either the abbreviated or accelerated technique depending on the situation. In certain situations, a brigade headquarters may use the deliberate technique as they develop their plan, while a subordinate headquarters may use either the abbreviated or accelerated technique. Whichever planning process is used, the commander and staff cannot become so focused on the planning process that they lose sight of what they are attempting to accomplish. The focus of any planning process should be to quickly develop a flexible, tactically sound, and fully integrated and synchronized plan that prepares the unit for mission success with the fewest casualties possible.

Once the plan is complete and issued, the commander and staff cannot get so attached to the plan that they fail to respond to the situation at hand. The planning process does not end once the order is issued. The planning process is continuous, and must be constantly evaluated, refined, and modified as the situation dictates. Your grade in combat is not determined by the quality of operations order produced. You are graded by your ability to accomplish your assigned mission, whether it is to destroy the enemy, or to conduct stability operations in Bosnia.

REMEMBER: THE BEST PLAN IS A FLEXIBLE PLAN.

CHAPTER II
The Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP)

Note: **This section will briefly review and describe the doctrinal MDMP as presented by FM 101-5 (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97). If you thoroughly understand the MDMP, skip this section and go to Section III.**

The deliberate application of the MDMP is the most time-consuming planning process. This process is used when ample time is available to develop, analyze, and compare multiple friendly and enemy COAs. This planning process follows a very detailed and deliberate methodology. Multiple COAs are carefully analyzed and compared; a recommended course of action is presented to, and approved by, the commander. Ultimately, an operations order or operations plan is produced. The deliberate technique can also help form the foundation upon which other abbreviated planning processes are constructed. The analyses created using the deliberate technique can and should be used during future planning sessions when ample time may not be available and the current situation, with minor changes, still applies. For a more detailed description of the MDMP, see **CALL Newsletter 93-3, Jul 93,** ***The Battalion and Brigade Battle Staff,*** and **FM 101-5** (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97).

THE MILITARY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

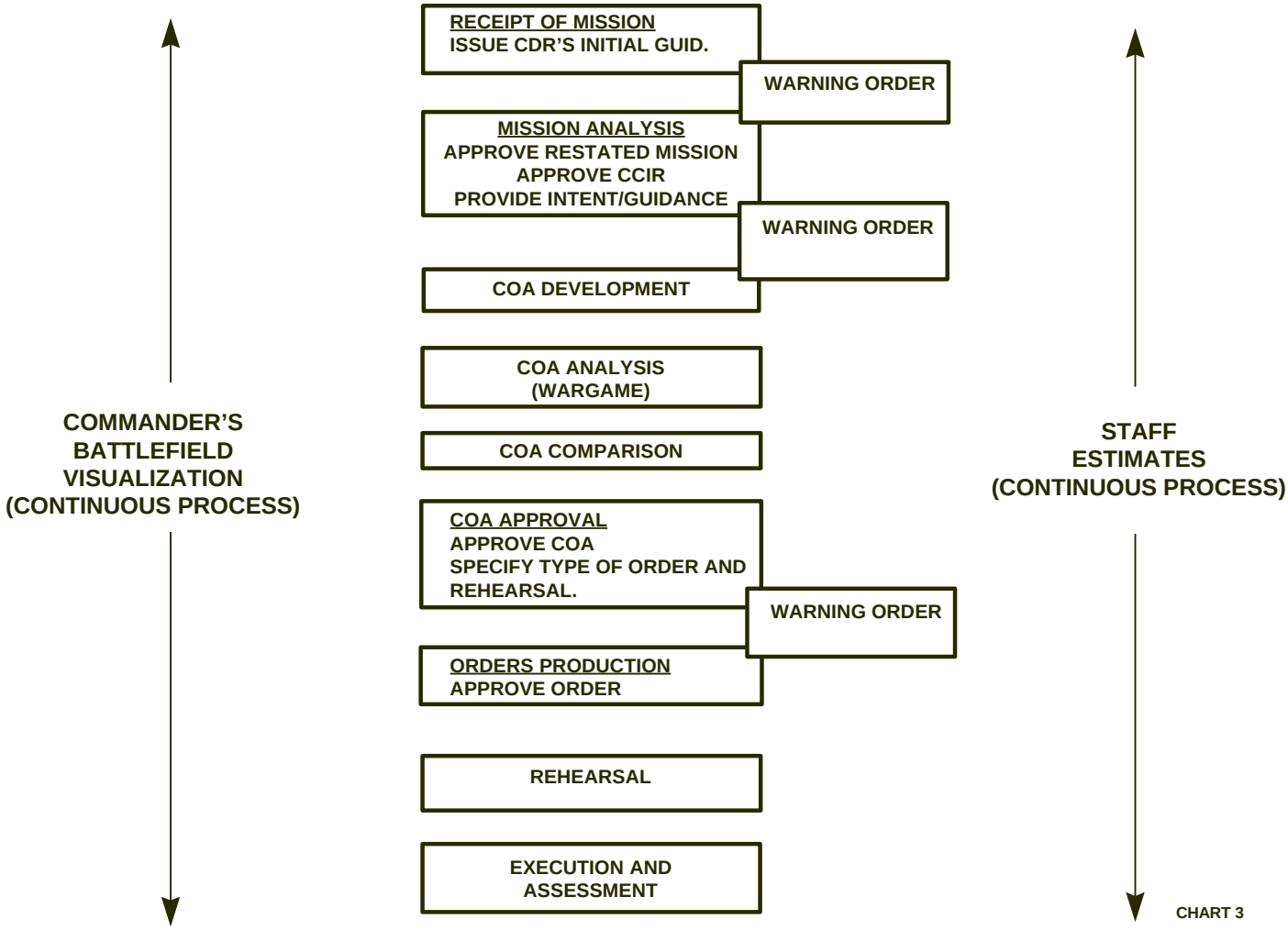


CHART 3

MISSION ANALYSIS

The purpose of the mission analysis is to assist the commander and staff in seeing the terrain, seeing the enemy, and seeing themselves within the context of their assigned mission. The desired endstate of the mission analysis process is a clearly defined unit mission statement, and a thorough staff assessment of the operation by each BOS. The mission analysis begins with the receipt of a mission, and ultimately culminates with the development of a restated mission and initial staff estimates. Sometimes the restated mission is obvious, other times it is not. If the mission statement does not accurately reflect the intent of higher headquarters, significant problems will occur, and time may be wasted. The staff conducts a very detailed analysis to determine the following:

- **Initial Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB), including the following:**
  - **Define battlefield environment.**
  - **Describe battlefield effects.**
  - **Evaluate the threat.**
  - **Determine threat COAs.**
- **Specified, implied, and essential tasks.**
- **Area of interest.**
- **Available assets.**
- **Constraints.**
- **Facts and assumptions relevant to the mission (current/projected combat power, logistics status, personnel status, etc.).**
- **Risk assessment.**
- **Initial CCIR.**
- **Initial reconnaissance plan.**
- **Initial time analysis.**
- **Restated mission.**

This staff analysis is normally a very formal process which culminates in a formal brief by the staff to the commander. While the staff is conducting its analysis, the commander is also conducting his own. The commander's analysis provides a frame of reference which helps him to quickly assess the staff's work, and also assists him in developing his initial intent and guidance. Mission analysis marks the beginning of the staff estimate process, yet it is not a one-time effort. ***It is a continuous process that must be constantly re-evaluated as the situation develops and new information becomes available.*** Products that result from the mission analysis include:

See the Terrain:
- **Modified combined obstacle overlay/avenue of approach overlay**
- **Photos or imagery products**
- **UAV products**
- **Terra-based products**

See the Enemy:
- **Enemy SITEMPs**
- **Initial event template**
- **PIR**
- **R/S Concept**

See Ourselves:

- **Specified/implied task list**
- **Constraints**
- **Detailed timeline**
- **Risk analysis**
- **Restated mission**
- **Warning order**

Note: *The enemy SITEMPs must be done prior to the mission analysis brief. They are used to brief the commander on likely enemy COAs. The event template is not required for the mission analysis brief. However, it should be done prior to COA development. It will assist you in identifying where specific enemy activities may occur as you develop your COAs.*

COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE

Once the commander approves the proposed restated mission, he is prepared to issue his guidance to the staff. The purpose of the commander's guidance is to provide the commander the opportunity to clearly articulate to the staff his vision, intent, and any additional planning guidance necessary. When using the deliberate technique, the commander provides his planning guidance to the staff upon completion of the mission analysis briefing (See chart 3). The intent of the commander's guidance is to establish guidelines and parameters for the staff to work within during the planning process.

Using the deliberate technique, the commander's guidance may be very formal, including written guidance to all staff sections, or issued verbally. When time is not significantly limited, the commander's guidance can be more general in nature, providing the staff maximum flexibility and latitude. As time becomes more constrained, the commander's guidance must become more specific and directive. FM 101-5 (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97) states that the commander's guidance should address the following:

- **Number of Enemy and Friendly COAs to consider.**
- **Initial CCIR.**
- **Reconnaissance guidance.**
- **Risk guidance.**
- **Deception guidance.**
- **Combat support/service support priorities.**
- **Time plan.**
- **Type of order to prepare.**
- **Type of rehearsal to conduct.**

Once the commander approves the restated mission and provides his guidance, the staff should then prepare and issue a warning order. The warning order should include the following:

- **Enemy situation**
- **Mission statement**
- **Proposed intent**
- **Initial coordinating instructions**
- **Reconnaissance and surveillance guidance and instructions**

For additional information regarding the commander's intent, see chapter 5, FM 101-5 (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97), and Appendix C of this newsletter.

COA DEVELOPMENT

After the commander issues his guidance, the staff should now have ample time to develop multiple friendly COAs. The purpose of the COA development phase is to develop COAs that are flexible, feasible, suitable, acceptable, complete, and fully integrate all combat multipliers. The staff should use the **doctrinal process** discussed in FM 101-5 (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97) to develop the COAs. This process is outlined below:

1. Analyze relative combat power.
2. Generate conceptual possibilities.
3. Array initial forces.
4. Develop scheme of maneuver and fires.
5. Determine command and control considerations.
6. Prepare COA statements and sketches.

The ***products that should result*** from the COA development are:

✔ COA sketches/statements
✔ Task/purpose for each subordinate unit (including combat support units)
✔ Generic task organization
✔ Operational graphics

COA ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON

The commander has provided his guidance to the staff, and the staff has now developed multiple COAs based on the current situation. The staff is now ready to conduct a detailed analysis of each COA and eventually compare them. The purpose of the COA analysis phase of the MDMP is to ensure all resources are fully integrated and synchronized. The COA analysis step is the most difficult and critical step to ensure the development of a fully integrated and synchronized plan. FM 101-5 (Drag Edition, 12 Feb 97) outlines a very deliberate COA analysis process. The steps of the process are listed below.

1. Gather the tools.
2. List all friendly forces.
3. List assumptions.
4. List known critical events and decision points.
5. List evaluation criteria.
6. Select the wargame method.
7. Select a recording technique (sketch-note method or synchronization matrix).
8. War-game the battle and assess the results.

Each of these steps serves a function and

must be carefully followed as the staff conducts the wargame session. If any of the steps are omitted, the outcome becomes less effective. After the COAs are analyzed, they are compared against one another using the evaluative criteria approved or assigned by the commander. The evaluative criteria can be determined by analyzing the commander's intent, restated mission, specified/implied tasks, or other information provided to the staff. The staff should have adequate time to conduct a detailed and deliberate analysis and comparison of multiple friendly and enemy COAs. These wargame sessions may cover the entire operation or a particular phase of the operation. Once the COAs are war-gamed, the staff then conducts a detailed comparison of each COA. This comparison ultimately leads to a staff recommendation to the commander. The products that result from the COA analysis are:

✔Final task organization
✔Refined event template
✔Refined PIR
✔Updated operational graphics
✔Synchronization matrix/wargame worksheet
✔Decision support template
✔Refined reconnaissance and surveillance plan/graphics
✔Fire support plan/graphics
✔Engineer support plan/graphics
✔Air defense plan/graphics
✔CSS plan/graphics

DECISION

Upon receiving the staff's COA decision brief, the commander must then make a decision. He must accept, modify, or reject the staff's recommendation. Based on the commander's decision and final guidance, the staff refines the COA and completes the plan, and prepares to issue the order.

The deliberate technique is analytical in nature. It is characterized by a detailed and deliberate process, and maximum flexibility of the staff. It is also sequential in nature. The involvement of the commander is somewhat limited when compared to the abbreviated forms of the MDMP. The **advantages** of using the deliberate approach are:

✔Analyzes and compares multiple friendly and enemy COAs.
✔Attempts to identify the best possible COA (within resource constraints).
✔Results in a very detailed operations order/operations plan.

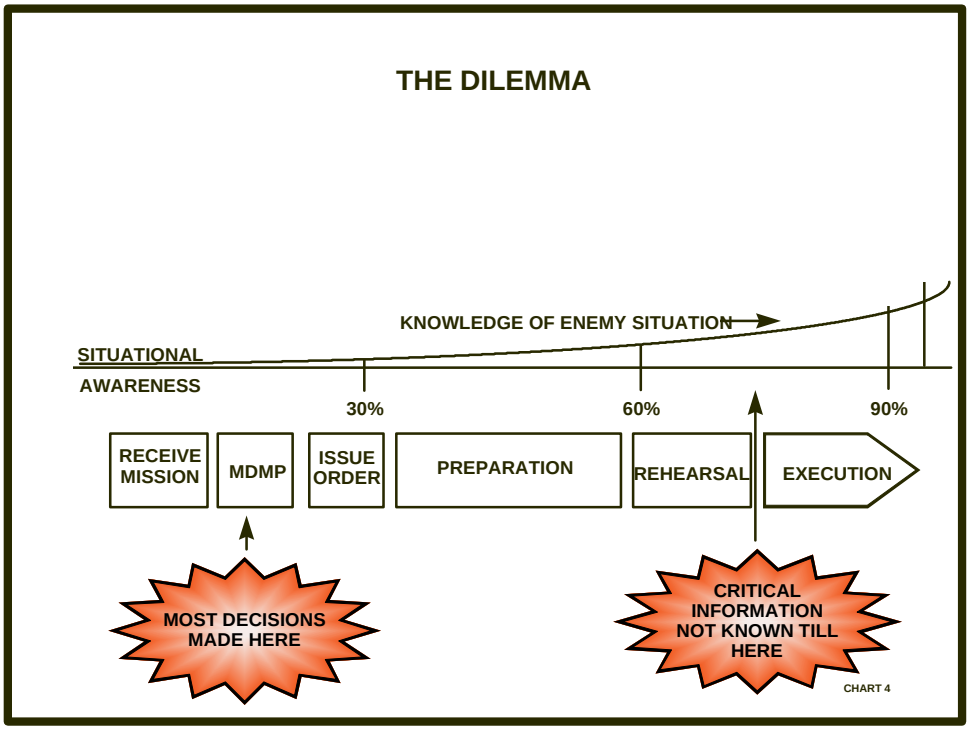
The **disadvantage** is: **Very time-consuming process.**

LEADERS/STAFF RECONNAISSANCE AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

An effective leaders/staff reconnaissance can have a significant impact on the planning process. This reconnaissance can assist the commander and staff as they develop their tentative plan. A leader's reconnaissance conducted early in the planning process will assist the commander and staff in confirming or denying their initial assessment. It may also allow the commander and staff to immediately focus on a specific COA, or eliminate COAs that are no longer acceptable based on the reconnaissance. The leaders/staff reconnaissance may take many forms. It may be a map reconnaissance, a physical reconnaissance of the actual terrain itself, or a viewing of the terrain from a vantage point. When conducting a reconnaissance with the staff, the commander must conduct a risk analysis to determine if the benefits of the reconnaissance outweigh the risks. During defensive operations, the reconnaissance of engagements areas can be conducted effectively with little risk associated. During offensive operations, conducting such a reconnaissance involves much more risk. In this situation, it may not be practical for the commander and staff to conduct a reconnaissance during the planning process. When this occurs, the commander may have to rely on the reconnaissance effort of his scout platoon or other available assets. The commander and staff must make every effort to get the reconnaissance assets deployed as soon as possible to facilitate early collection. The information collected must then be analyzed, and incorporated into the planning process as appropriate. The initial plan may have to be slightly adjusted, or major modifications may have to be made based on the reconnaissance and surveillance effort. The earlier the need for modifications can be identified, the easier they can be incorporated and synchronized into the plan. The leader/staff reconnaissance applies to both the deliberate and abbreviated forms of the MDMP.

THE DILEMMA

The deliberate approach to the MDMP is a proven process. The process works well, but requires significant amounts of time to develop, analyze, and compare multiple friendly and enemy COAs. The modern day battlefield does not always provide us the luxury of having ample time to complete such a process. Fast-paced operations require an accurate and detailed situational awareness about the terrain, the enemy, and ourselves. This level of a detailed situational awareness requires time to develop -- time we do not always have. On one hand, we need to issue orders and instructions immediately to facilitate ample troop-leading time for subordinates. On the other hand, we do not have the desired level of situational awareness to issue detailed, integrated, and synchronized orders and instructions. We generally do not acquire this level of situational awareness until later in the planning process. This is an extremely complex problem that requires us to implement the MDMP using different techniques and procedures to facilitate incorporating the necessary changes to the original plan.

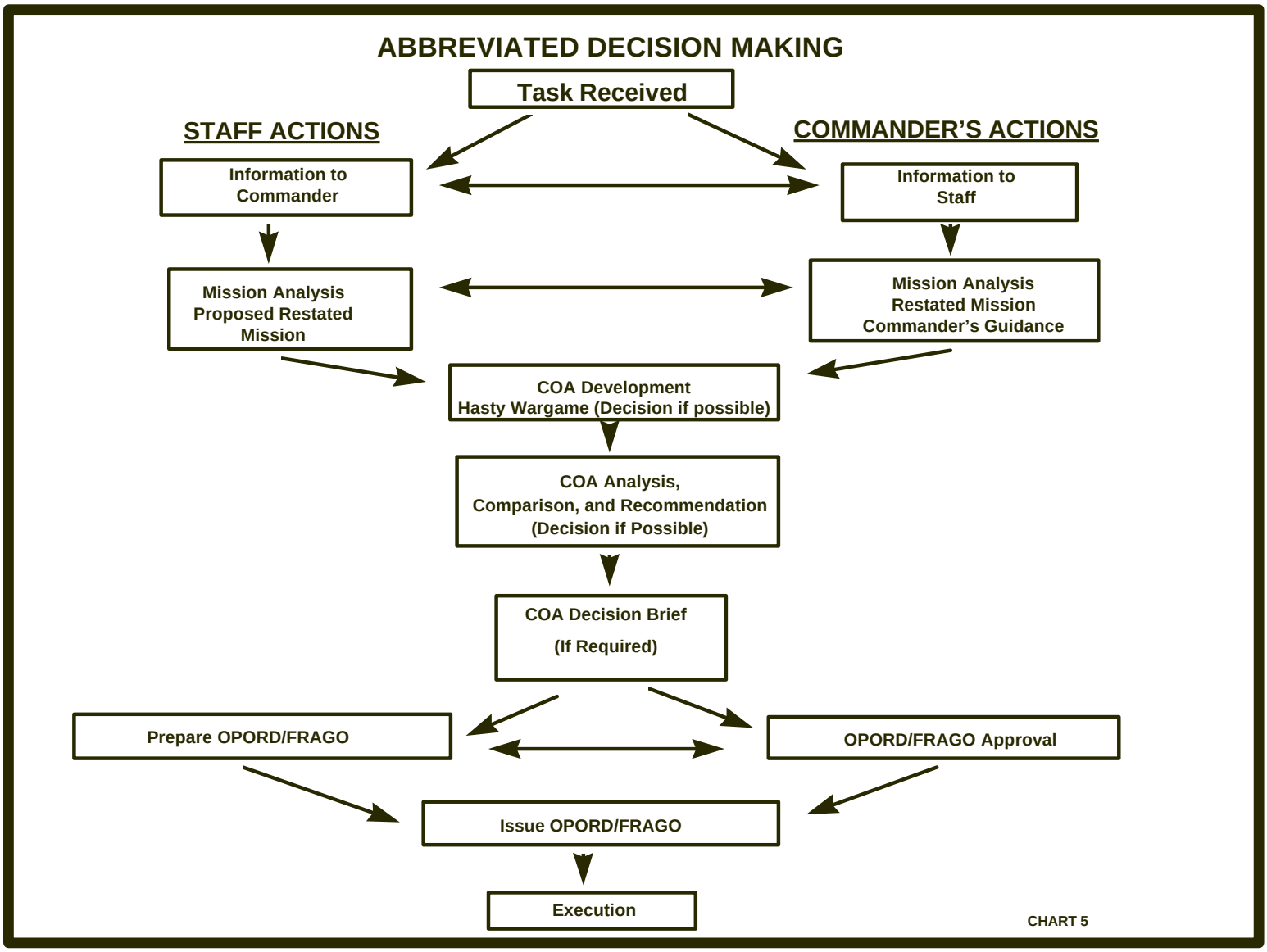


CHAPTER III
Abbreviating the MDMP

The abbreviated technique is the planning process that units will most often use in a tactical environment. This process is most commonly used when one or more of the following situations occur:

- **Less time is available as compared to the deliberate MDMP.**
- **Staff is relatively new and inexperienced.**
- **Commander's access to his staff is somewhat limited.**

This process is very similar to the deliberate MDMP, but employs slightly different techniques to save time. The following issues, discussions, techniques, and procedures are presented to provide specific ways to abbreviate the planning process. Chart 5 outlines the abbreviated form of the MDMP. The major difference between the deliberate and abbreviated form are the level of involvement of the commander and the nature of the guidance that the commander issues. The abbreviated form will normally result in the development of an operations order.


ABBREVIATED DECISION MAKING
Task Received
STAFF ACTIONS
COMMANDER'S ACTIONS
Information to Commander
Information to Staff
Mission Analysis Proposed Restated Mission
Mission Analysis Restated Mission Commander's Guidance
COA Development Hasty Wargame (Decision if possible)
COA Analysis, Comparison, and Recommendation (Decision if Possible)
COA Decision Brief (If Required)
Prepare OPORD/FRAGO
OPORD/FRAGO Approval
Issue OPORD/FRAGO
Execution
CHART 5

MISSION ANALYSIS

ISSUE: **Typically, most delays during the mission analysis can be traced to the S2. The S2 must have his enemy situational templates (SITEMPs) as complete as possible prior to the mission analysis briefing.**

DISCUSSION: This is no easy task. To accomplish this effort in a timely manner, the S2 must ensure that he constantly updates the IPB. **The IPB process is not a one-time effort. It is a process that requires constant attention and updating as the situation changes.** This requires the G2/S2 of the next higher headquarters to provide all intelligence products to subordinate units as soon as possible. An experienced liaison officer (LO) can make significant contributions in this area by providing warning orders to the unit and passing all intelligence products as soon as they become available. (For additional information on LO operations see **CALL Newsletter 95-7, May 95, Tactical Operations Center (TOC),** and the **May-Jun 96 Edition of News From the Front).** Under most circumstances, the higher headquarters G2/S2 should have most of his intelligence products near completion prior to the orders brief. O/Cs report observing some brigade-level staffs who have refused to release any products until after the brigade order. This technique severely hinders the parallel planning of subordinate units. Commanders, G2s, and S2s must realize the significance of releasing any and all products immediately as they become available. Commanders must ruthlessly support and enforce this concept. If parallel planning is to occur, and the planning process is to be IPB-driven, this is the only way it can be conducted in a timely fashion. Once the SITEMPs are developed, they must be constantly updated and adjusted as new information or intelligence becomes available.

Additionally, S2s must conduct their own prior preparation. This includes the following:

Conducting terrain analysis.

Developing enemy doctrinal templates.

Preparing blown-up sketches of critical terrain.

These items can be prepared with little more information than what is included in a good warning order. Finally, the S2 section must be trained to conduct current and future operations simultaneously for a limited amount of time. This is perhaps the most difficult task for the S2 section to accomplish based on current manning levels and organizational structure.

The TF S2 is typically the youngest and most inexperienced officer on the staff. He can not be expected to carry the entire load of the IPB process himself. ***The IPB process is a commander's responsibility, and the responsibility of each staff officer, not just the S2s.*** Other staff officers must assist the S2 in developing the enemy SITEMPs within their own area of expertise.

Additionally, the S2 must have his initial IPB done to facilitate early deployment of reconnaissance assets. Reconnaissance assets must be deployed as soon as possible to facilitate information collection that may result in making adjustments to the initial plan.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ Higher headquarters must provide subordinate S2s any and all products as they become available. Use your LO and multiple warning orders to facilitate this.

✸ The S2 section must prepare ahead of time blown-up sketches of critical areas (objectives, engagement areas etc.), terrain analysis (modified combined obstacles overlay), doctrinal templates, and other tools as necessary.

✸ Other staff officers should assist the S2 as he develops the enemy SITEMPs.

✸ The entire S2 section must be actively involved in assisting the S2 as he develops his intelligence estimate. The development of the intelligence estimate cannot be conducted by the S2 alone. He must receive assistance from his subordinates. The G2 and S2 must ensure that home-station training is focused on developing the skills of individual soldiers within each S2 section. (See Chapter VI, Home-Station Training, for ideas on IPB training.)

ISSUE: **The mission analysis process often takes longer than necessary due to poor preparation and anticipation by the staff.**

DISCUSSION: When time is limited, the key to success is anticipation and preparation by the staff. Staff officers must constantly update unit status reports to determine amounts of CL III, IV, V, equipment maintenance status, and other critical information (facts). These facts allow staff officers to develop assumptions that are critical to the planning process. Reporting of this information must be a push system versus a pull system. Subordinate units must rapidly update their reports as the situation changes. Good reporting SOPs must be developed and enforced. When necessary, the staff must be aggressive in attaining this information. The mission analysis briefing should not develop into a unit readiness briefing. The staff officer must know the status of each subordinate unit, and brief relevant information as it applies to the situation. Charts are typically used to consolidate this information and ultimately reduce briefing times when used to provide situational updates to the commander.

For additional information regarding charts and other tools, see CALL Newsletter 95-7. If properly trained, RTOs and NCOs can easily accomplish this function, thus relieving the staff officer from this time-consuming task.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ The staff must anticipate and prepare for the mission analysis. Staff officers and NCOs must have statuses on all classes of supply and other pertinent information prior to the mission analysis process.

✸ Refine, practice, and enforce your

reporting procedures. Subordinate units must constantly update their reports as the situation changes.

✸ Develop standardized charts to monitor this type of data and to assist the commander in obtaining a quick snapshot of his unit.

✸ Staff officers should develop a generic list of issues for particular types of missions to consider during the mission analysis. This list will assist them in preparing for the mission analysis process. See Appendix B for examples.

ISSUE: **Staffs are often slow to assemble prior to the mission analysis process.**

DISCUSSION: The assembly of appropriate staff officers periodically hinders the mission analysis process. We have all seen or experienced situations where the staff is assembled and waiting for another staff officer to arrive at the TOC. Once again the staff must anticipate the mission analysis and quickly assemble at the TOC. Unit SOPs must identify who is to attend, who the alternates are, when they should assemble, and what information or products they are required to bring such as IPB products, friendly graphics, and those critical facts and assumptions that are pertinent to the operation. Attached units who are not typically assigned to the unit must understand what is expected and the importance of being prompt and prepared. The XO plays a key role in coordinating the activities of the staff and must take the lead in getting the staff prepared for the planning process.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ The battle captain/NCO should issue a warning order to the staff alerting them of the pending planning process.

✸ Staff officers must once again anticipate the mission analysis. They must be prompt and prepared. The staff should begin to prepare for the mission analysis immediately upon receipt of a warning order.

✸ Ensure elements that are not habitually attached to your unit understand the requirement and its importance. Provide them a copy of your TSOP to familiarize them with your internal operating procedures.

✸ Identify the orders group in your warning orders.

ISSUE: **Staffs periodically misinterpret the higher headquarters mission, intent, and guidance.**

DISCUSSION: Staffs have been observed spending hours developing plans, only to determine that they misinterpreted guidance from higher headquarters. This results in significant amounts of time being wasted, forcing the staffs to retrace their efforts.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ If confused by guidance and instructions from higher headquarters, *seek clarification immediately.*

✸ Conduct confirmation briefings with subordinates immediately following order issue to ensure they understand the commander's intent and concept.

✸ LOs who are familiar with the plan of the higher headquarters can assist by attending and participating in the planning process.

Finally, conduct as formal of a mission analysis brief as time permits. This is often the only time the entire staff is present, and presents the only opportunity to ensure that all staff members are starting from a common reference point. The mission analysis brief should not be a brief just to the commander as he sits in his HWMMV. This brief should be considered as a brief from the staff to the staff. Once again, the mission analysis is critical to ensure that you thoroughly understand the task. This sounds rather elementary in nature, but if the mission is not clearly understood, the results can be devastating.

Products that result from the mission analysis include:

Modified combined obstacle overlay/avenue of approach overlay
Enemy SITEMPs
Initial event template
R/S concept
Specified/implied task list
Constraints
Detailed integrated timeline
Risk analysis
Movement plan (if necessary)
Proposed CCIR
Restated mission
Warning order

COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE

ISSUE: **The commander must provide specific planning guidance to the staff so it can continue to develop its staff estimates and develop courses of action.**

DISCUSSION: When using the abbreviated technique, the commander's guidance is very similar to the guidance he provides his staff when using the deliberate technique. He issues his guidance to the staff upon approving the restated mission. However, when using the abbreviated technique, his guidance must be more specific and directive in nature. The elements of the commander's guidance presented in the previous chapter is still applicable, but the commander's guidance must be more detailed and directive in a time-constrained environment. He must specifically

tell his staff what COAs he wants developed. He should include tentative task organization and scheme of maneuver. He must also determine which enemy SITEMPs he wants the COAs war-gamed against and what branch plans he wants incorporated within each COA. The staff will probably not have time to conduct a detailed wargame session with numerous friendly and enemy COAs. By providing this type of guidance, the commander has slightly limited his staff's flexibility and initiative in effort to save time. This technique will result in providing the staff more time to synchronize the COA during the wargame session.

One staff was observed spending significant amounts of time developing and war-gaming two COAs based on vague commander's guidance. The commander responded during the decision brief by saying, "I don't like either COA; here is what we are going to do." This situation resulted in significant amounts of time being wasted. To assist in developing guidance, some commanders have developed a generic SOP containing typical guidance to the staff that they can use as a guide when time is limited.

TECHNIQUES:

✷ **When using the abbreviated technique, the commander's guidance must be specific and direct.**

✷ **Develop an SOP that identifies what type of guidance staff officers require from the commander. See Appendix C for examples.**

COA DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: **The commander and staff must be trained to rapidly develop courses of action.**

DISCUSSION: The COA development step of the MDMP is the first step of the process where significant amounts of time can be saved if required. At this point in the process, the staff has conducted the mission analysis brief, and the commander should have issued his guidance to the staff. Now the staff and commander should be prepared to develop the COAs.

Developing a COA using the abbreviated technique is more difficult due to time constraints and other factors (as outlined in chart 2, pg I-4) that may affect the planning process. The key to using this planning process is the commander's guidance. Prior to COA development, the commander's guidance should have been very specific and directive. The commander should have provided details to the staff (such as a sketch) outlining what he expects or does not expect in each COA. Now the staff should begin to use the same COA development process as outlined in the deliberate technique. The only difference between the two processes, besides time available, are the level of detail provided in the

commander's guidance, and the latitude and flexibility of the staff. The abbreviated technique is characterized by detailed guidance by the commander, and only one or two COAs developed by the staff based on the commander's guidance. One COA that facilitates flexibility is better than three that do not.

A technique that O/Cs have observed some units use at the CTCs involves conducting a hasty wargame once the COAs are developed. This hasty wargame is conducted by the commander and a select group of staff officers (S2, S3, and FSO) based on the mission. The intent of this wargame is to continue to develop and mature the COA prior to the formal wargame effort conducted by the staff. This technique provides the commander an opportunity to refine his COA and make any necessary adjustments prior to the detailed wargame. The key difference between the hasty wargame and the detailed wargame is in the purpose of each. The purpose of the hasty wargame is to refine and mature the COA. The purpose of the detailed wargame is to synchronize the COA. (See Chart 5.)

If developing multiple friendly COAs, the hasty wargame technique presents the commander with an opportunity to make an early decision. If the commander participates during the hasty wargame sessions, he may suddenly determine that he favors one COA versus another. If this occurs, he can immediately make this decision. If the commander cannot be present during the hasty wargame sessions, and he is unable to make a decision, conduct a COA backbrief to the commander after the hasty wargame session. This technique facilitates an early decision by the commander, allowing his staff to focus on the selected COA instead of multiple COAs (saving time).

TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✷ The commander should be very specific as he provides guidance to his staff. This guidance should include detailed information outlining the COAs as well as any branches or contingency plans that he expects his staff to develop.

✷ Consider using the hasty wargame technique. This will assist in maturing your COA and will also increase the effectiveness of the formal wargame session. This technique will allow you to concentrate on synchronizing the COA as opposed to continuing to develop the COA during the formal wargame session.

ISSUE: **The S2's enemy SITEMPs are often times not used when developing COAs.**

DISCUSSION: When the enemy SITEMPs are not used, the result is a plan that is not being driven by the IPB process. Without the SITEMPs, the analysis of relative combat power and the arraying of initial forces as described in FM 101-5 (DRAG Edition, 12 Feb 97) cannot be conducted. As previously discussed, the S2 should develop large, detailed, and accurate sketches with the enemy SITEMPs

applied. These large sketches allow the entire staff to easily see and provide input.

TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✸ The S2's SITEMPs must be present and used during COA development.

✸ The S2 must actively participate, providing assistance in analyzing force ratios, threat weapon capabilities and as much intelligence and information about the enemy as possible.

✸ Other battlefield operating systems (BOSs) representatives should assist the S2 in analyzing the enemy situation within their area of expertise.

Once the COAs are developed, the products produced during this step of the process should be:

COA sketch and statement for each COA developed.

Task and purpose for each subordinate unit (including supporting units).

Basic graphic control measures.

Generic task organization.

Do not allow your lack of organization and prior planning to be an excuse to omit these products. They are very useful when incorporated into the process.

COA ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON

The COA analysis step is the most difficult and time-consuming step of the planning process, but it is also another step where specific techniques and procedures can be applied to save significant amounts of time.

ISSUE: **The commander and staff must war-game the COAs in a detailed fashion to ensure all battlefield operating systems are fully integrated and synchronized.**

DISCUSSION: Wargaming while using the abbreviated technique is slightly different. Under ideal circumstances, this process may include war-gaming only one or two friendly COAs against the enemy COAs. These wargame sessions may only cover one or two selected critical events. The commander and staff must identify and prioritize which critical events they want analyzed. The commander plays a critical role during this process. The commander should attend the wargame session and be prepared to make decisions as required, provide guidance, negate unwanted concepts, and assist in keeping the staff focused. If the commander is present during the wargaming of multiple COAs, it is likely that he will rapidly identify which COA he favors. If this occurs, the commander can quickly decide to discard unwanted COAs, allocating more time to refine

the selected COA. This technique saves significant amounts of time when applied. (See Chart 5, pg III-2.)

TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✸ Determine how much time you can commit to the wargame process, and ensure this timeline is followed.

✸ Identify and prioritize critical events. These critical events might include: actions on the objective, actions in the EA, actions on the PZ/LZ/DZ, and passage of lines. These critical events can be identified by analyzing your specified and implied tasks. Conduct the wargame session according to the prioritized list of critical events. War-game as many critical events as possible in the allotted amount of time; however, stick to your timeline.

✸ War-game critical events using the box or belt technique. If time permits, war-game multiple boxes or belts.

✸ The commander should attend the wargame session to provide input to the staff and make decisions as needed. Participation by the commander during the COA analysis process can prevent the need for a decision brief later (saving time).

ISSUE: **Many units were observed taking significant amounts of time (over one hour) to compare multiple COAs.**

DISCUSSION: If developing multiple COAs, the last step of the COA analysis is the COA comparison. During this step of the process, the staff compares the COAs using the evaluation criteria identified earlier in the process. This process sometimes results in emotional and heated discussions by the staff officers who are defending the COA they personally developed. This heated discussion often wastes valuable time.

TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✸ Ensure your evaluation criteria are specifically defined before you begin the wargame process. Example: The term "massing of fires" is commonly used to compare COAs. As is, the term is very vague and does not mean much. Quantify your evaluation criteria. Example: How many tank platoons can engage and mass direct fires on the objective? Phrased as such, it specifically quantifies the term used to compare the COAs.

✸ Limit your evaluation criteria to the four or five most important. These can be determined by analyzing the mission statement, commander's intent, and commander's guidance. Do not use a laundry list of 20 different terms that are insignificant. This only increases the amount of time the staff must take to compare each COA.

✸ Staff officers must not get emotional and attempt to defend their COA. There is not time for it. They must remain unemotional and unbiased in effort to speed the process.

ADDITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✸ Select your wargame technique (belt, box, or avenues in depth) based on the amount of available time. If time is short, do not select the avenue-in-depth technique. Otherwise, you may war-game crossing the LD and movement to the objective, but run out of time before you discuss actions at the objective. If required, war-game multiple boxes or belts. The belts or boxes are the quickest techniques to apply.

✸ The TOC must be prepared and configured to conduct the wargame session. Charts and boards must be cleaned and prepared for use. The blown-up terrain sketch and enemy SITEMPs must be prepared and present for the wargame session. Anticipate this event and prepare for it. Trained NCOs and soldiers can play a significant role in accomplishing these tasks.

✸ Use recorders throughout the process. These recorders should be trained to capture coordinating instructions and sub-unit instructions during the process. If this occurs, a portion of the order will be written before the planning process is complete.

During the wargame process, the following products should be developed or finalized:

Operational graphics.
Synchronization matrix/wargame worksheet.
Decision support template.
Reconnaissance and surveillance plan.
Fire support plan/graphics.
Engineer support plan/graphics.
Air defense plan/graphics.
CSS plan/graphics.

DECISION

The staff has now developed, analyzed, and compared each COA. The staff is now prepared to make a recommendation to the commander.

ISSUE: **Conducting the decision brief often takes much longer than necessary.**

DISCUSSION: The commander and staff must incorporate techniques that will either reduce or completely eliminate the need for a decision brief. When implementing the deliberate technique, this is normally not an issue; however, when using the abbreviated technique, this can be a significant problem. The

key to solving this problem is the commander. If the commander has observed and participated in the planning process, the decision may be rapidly apparent. When this occurs, the commander should make an on-the-spot decision. This will completely eliminate the need for a lengthy decision brief, and provide the staff more time to refine the selected COA or begin to prepare orders and instructions. If the commander cannot be present during the planning process, the staff must quickly brief the commander, and make a recommendation to him. Most units use COA comparison charts to facilitate the commander's decision. Charts work well when used effectively. Limit and clearly define your evaluation criteria as discussed previously.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ Ensure COA sketches are present during the decision brief. This will assist the commander in visualizing and distinguishing between each COA.

✸ Ensure your COA or COAs are complete with tentative task organization, COA statement, and task and purpose for each subordinate unit.

✸ Use COA comparison charts to present to the commander. This will reduce the amount of time required to conduct the decision brief.

✸ When possible, the commander should participate in the planning process. This technique can potentially eliminate the need for the comparison and decision brief.

The abbreviated technique is characterized by more specific and directive guidance provided by the commander, and increased involvement of the commander.

The *advantages* of the abbreviated technique are:

Requires less time to conduct than the deliberate technique.

Based on more specific and directive guidance, the staff efforts are more focused.

The *disadvantages* are:

Slightly limits staff flexibility and initiative.

Does not explore all available options when developing friendly COAs.

CHAPTER IV
Accelerating the Decision-Making Process

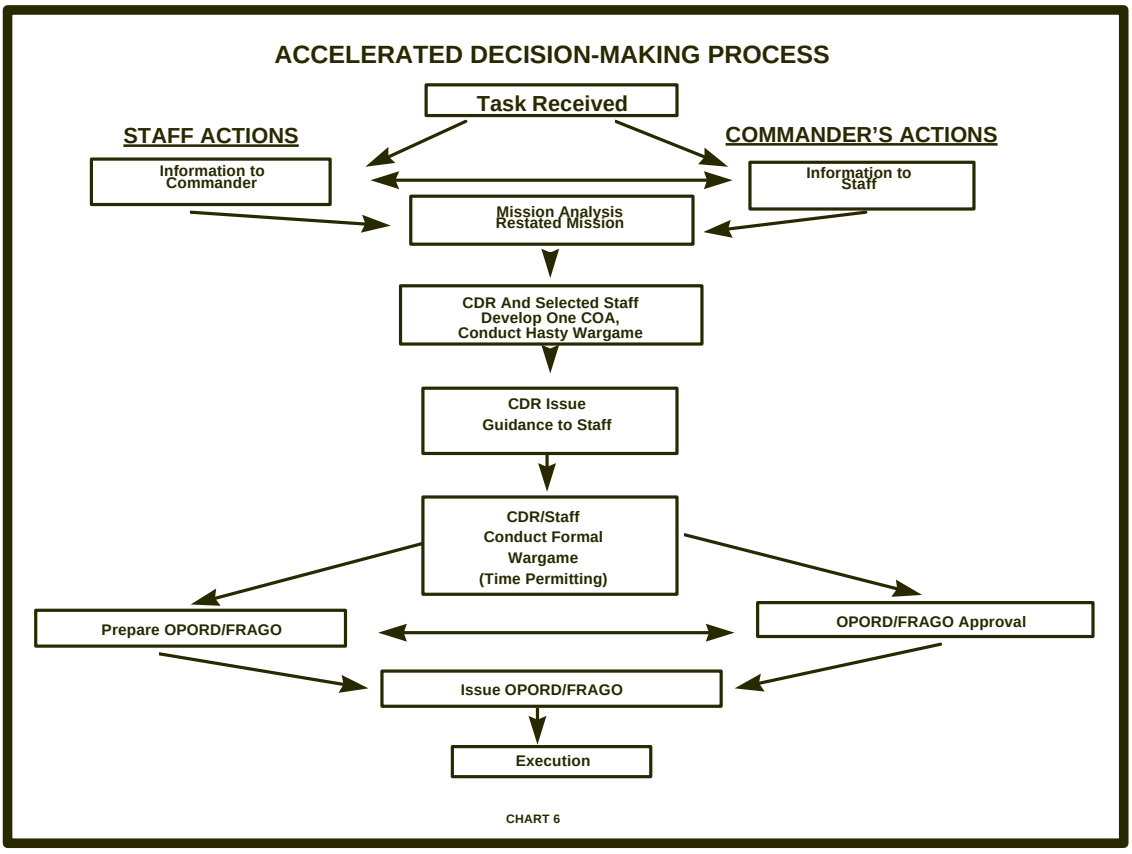
The accelerated technique is the most difficult of the three techniques to implement. This process may be used when one or more of the following conditions apply:

✸ Commander has a staff available to assist him in developing the plan, but little time exists to use a more formal process.

✸ Commander does not have a staff, or the staff is not accessible.

When these conditions apply, the commander must primarily rely on troop-leading procedures to develop his plan. The accelerated technique will assist the commander in developing a tentative plan. Under extreme circumstances, this may be little more than a mental process, but, nonetheless, the commander can use this process to assist him as he develops his plan. The accelerated technique follows the basic procedures already discussed in the deliberate and abbreviated processes, but the differences are more significant. Many of the techniques already discussed can and should be used when using the accelerated technique. The major differences between the abbreviated and accelerated techniques involve the commander's guidance, and the COA development phase. (See Chart 6.) The accelerated technique is characterized by very active participation by the commander, and development of one COA that is suitable, feasible, and flexible.

In some situations, the products developed using the accelerated technique may be the same as those developed when using the deliberate or abbreviated technique. In extreme situations, time may not be available to develop the same products. The accelerated technique will normally result in the development of FRAGO.



MISSION ANALYSIS

ISSUE: **When using the accelerated technique, the commander and staff must be able to rapidly conduct the mission analysis to determine the restated mission.**

DISCUSSION: When using the deliberate or abbreviated technique, the staff conducted a detailed mission analysis to develop the restated mission. When using the accelerated technique, time may not be available to use the same procedures. Under the most extreme circumstances, the mission analysis may be nothing more than a mental process conducted by the commander and key staff members (CDR, S2, S3, FSO, XO, and other critical personnel). ***This should be the exception***

rather than the norm. The staff may be forced to brief their initial estimates orally, without the use of charts, viewgraphs or other tools. Remember, conduct as formal a mission analysis as time allows. During the mission analysis, there are no major differences between the three techniques. There are no techniques that will significantly reduce the amount of time required to conduct the mission analysis. Anticipation, prior preparation, and experience by the staff are the keys to a timely mission analysis process.

TECHNIQUES:

✷ **Commander must get personally involved by supervising and managing the mission analysis process.**

✷ **In extreme situations, the staff must be prepared to brief the commander without the use of visual aids.**

COA DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: **When time is severely limited, providing the commander's guidance after the mission analysis may not be the most appropriate time.**

DISCUSSION: Instead, the commander may decide to immediately begin personally developing ***one*** COA with input from selected staff officers. There is probably not time to seek input from every staff officer, so the commander must determine who is critical and who is not. As a starting point, the commander should consider the S2, S3, FSO, and Executive Officer. This team may vary depending on the type of mission. For example, in the defense, the staff engineer may be included. During stability and support operations, the civil affairs, public affairs, JAG, or psychological operations officer may be included. The commander may also wish to include subordinate commanders, incorporating their experience into the process. This team must then quickly develop a flexible COA that they feel will accomplish the mission. The key to success, when using the accelerated technique, is to rapidly develop a base plan with appropriate branches that is flexible, feasible, suitable, and acceptable. ***DO NOT WORRY ABOUT DEVELOPING THE PERFECT COA; THERE IS NOT TIME FOR IT***. This is the major distinction between the accelerated technique and the others.

Once the COA is developed, the commander might consider conducting a hasty wargame as discussed in Chapter 3. In extreme situations, this may be the only opportunity to conduct the wargame process. Next, the commander should then begin to quickly develop his guidance to the staff. The

accelerated technique is characterized by an active role of the commander, and very specific guidance to the staff. (See Chart 6, pg IV-2.)

TECHNIQUES:

✸ Focus on developing one COA with branch plans that is flexible, feasible, suitable, and acceptable.

✸ The commander plays the central role when developing this COA.

COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE

Once the commander has developed the COA, he must issue guidance to his staff so it can refine and war-game the COA. The commander's guidance to the staff must be directive and very specific. The staff's responsibility is to support the commander's plan, not developing the perfect plan. Well-developed and clearly communicated commander's guidance can be a significant timesaver. Poorly communicated or incomplete guidance is a significant time waster. The commander's guidance should serve to keep the staff focused by establishing parameters to work within. Commander's guidance must be constantly reviewed and analyzed. As the situation changes and information becomes available, the commander may have to alter his guidance to the staff.

COA ANALYSIS

ISSUE: **The commander and staff must rapidly conduct the COA analysis process.**

DISCUSSION: Conducting the wargame process using the accelerated technique is the most difficult of the three processes. This process uses some of the same techniques as previously presented. Because only one COA was developed, the purpose of the COA analysis is not to analyze and compare multiple COAs that result in a recommendation to the commander, but to synchronize and integrate the commander's directed COA. This wargame session should focus on refining the branches or contingencies to the base plan. This wargame session should follow the formal wargame process as much as time allows. Once again, focus on the most critical events. You do not have time to war-game the entire operation. When war-gaming using the

accelerated technique, involvement of the commander is even more important. The staff should use the box technique, focusing on actions at the objective or the engagement area (EA). If time permits, war-game other critical events as well. (See Chart 6, pg IV-2.) The staff must work to support the commander's plan. ***However, as the staff works to refine the plan, it cannot become so biased that it develops a plan that is infeasible and insupportable.*** If the staff determines that it cannot support the commander's plan, then a new COA must be developed.

TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES:

✸ If time permits, conduct a hasty wargame session during the COA development step. Ensure you identify and develop branches to the base plan.

✸ The commander must get involved. He must supervise the wargame session, actively participate, make decisions, and provide guidance as required.

✸ Use the box technique, focusing on the most critical event first.

DECISION

When using the accelerated technique, a decision brief is not required because only one COA was developed. The only decision that may be required is if the developed COA becomes unsuitable, infeasible, or unacceptable. If this occurs, another COA must be developed.

The **advantages** of the accelerated technique are:

✔ Requires less time.

✔ Facilitates adaptation to a rapidly changing situation.

✔ Allows commander to compensate for lack of a staff or an experienced staff.

The **disadvantages** are:

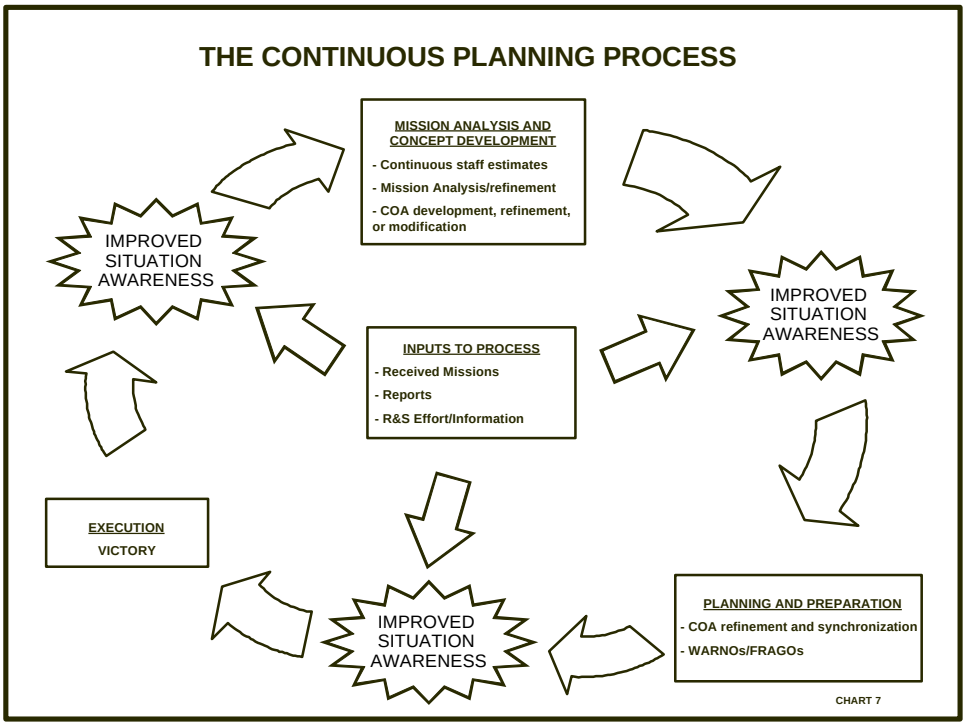
✔ Significantly limits staff initiative and flexibility.

✔ Very directive; explores only one friendly COA.

✔ May result in only an oral order or fragmentary order.

CHAPTER V
REFINING THE PLAN

As previously stated, the MDMP is a continuous process; it never really ends. Remember, the original order was probably published with approximately 30-percent situational awareness with respect to the enemy, terrain, and friendly situation (See Chart 4, p. II-8). As the situation develops, and your situational awareness improves, changes to the original plan are usually imperative. If necessary changes are not made, you are fighting the plan, not the current situation. Implementing changes to an order that has already been issued is no easy task, especially in a time compressed environment. To alleviate this problem, there are numerous tools available to assist you in this effort. These tools are an aggressive reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) effort, continuous staff estimates, the MDMP itself, and warning orders (see Chart 7 below).



Your R&S effort must be aggressive and continuous. You must constantly seek to attain as much information about the enemy as possible. You developed the original SITEMPs early in the planning process, and it was probably only a best guess. Once collected, information generated by your R&S efforts must be analyzed to confirm or deny your initial enemy SITEMPs. This information may ultimately result in changes to your SITEMPs, which may then create changes to your selected COA.

If changes to the selected COA are required, the COA must be quickly refined, developed, and re-synchronized as necessary. Minor changes may be incorporated without much problem. Major changes will require more time and effort. In this situation, you may have to use the MDMP, or, more appropriately, one of the abbreviated forms of the MDMP. The techniques and procedures already discussed still apply. To facilitate these last-minute changes, staff officers must constantly evaluate, update, and access their respective staff estimates, and their impact on the original plan. For example, a simple change in the personnel or maintenance status of a unit may have a significant impact on task organization, main and supporting efforts, as well as subordinate unit task/purpose. Required changes can only be identified if staff officers are constantly evaluating and adjusting, as necessary, their initial staff estimates.

Once necessary changes are identified, these changes must be rapidly and clearly transmitted to subordinate units. Normally these changes will be communicated in the form of a WARNO or FRAGO. Depending on the significance of the change, this information may be transmitted verbally during a commander's conference call, or in writing. WARNOs and FRAGOs must be constantly used to alert subordinate units of impending changes, and to facilitate maximum troop-leading time.

TECHNIQUES:

✸ Constantly review and adjust, as necessary, your CCIR. These CCIR drive the R&S effort.

✸ Your R&S effort must constantly seek to gain as much information about the enemy as possible in an effort to answer the commander's PIR. This information must be evaluated and incorporated into the current SITEMPs.

✸ Staff officers must also constantly update their staff estimates and assess potential impacts on the current plan/situation.

✸ If changes are necessary to the current plan, use one of the abbreviated forms of the MDMP to refine, develop, and synchronize the modifications as necessary.

✸ Use multiple FRAGOs and WARNOs to communicate changes as necessary.

✸ Plan for potential refinements or decision points. Issue these branch plans with the original operations order. Once information becomes available that supports the appropriate decision point, execute the branch plan with a FRAGO.

CHAPTER VI
Home-Station Training

This chapter provides additional ideas on how to train and implement some of the TTPs presented in this document while at home station.

1.) Depending on your staff's level of experience, **consider beginning with a series of classes on the MDMP.** These classes should focus on ensuring all personnel who participate in the planning process understand the formal process. Ensure you include all NCOs, soldiers, and slice units that will be expected to participate in the process. These classes should present you the opportunity to customize and streamline your planning process. During these classes, identify roles and responsibilities of each individual involved (soldiers and NCOs included). These roles and responsibilities should be as specific as possible. Depending on personnel turbulence, these classes may need to be conducted more than once.

2.) After the formal classes are conducted, **exercise the staff using the MDMP.** You must first be able to conduct the MDMP to standard before you can attempt to use any of the abbreviated processes. A technique that has worked well for some units is to use the Small Group Instruction (SGI) method, similar to what is used in the advanced courses. The commander should serve as the SGI. ***This task cannot be left to the XO.*** This is the commander's opportunity to prepare and train his staff.

3.) **Ensure you incorporate your NCOs and enlisted soldiers.** If trained properly, they can be an asset to the process, and save the staff officers significant amounts of time. The table below will assist you in determining how to incorporate your NCOs and enlisted soldiers in the process.

PLANNING PROCESS	CDR	STAFF OFFICERS	STAFF NCOs	RTOs	CLERKS/ TYPISTS
MISSION ANALYSIS					
-PREPARES CHARTS FOR MISSION ANALYSIS				X	X
-PREPARES TERRAIN SKETCHES				X	X
-UPDATES AND POSTS UNIT REPORTS/STATUS			X	X	
-PREPARES TOC FOR PLANNING PROCESS			X	X	X
-CONDUCTS MISSION ANALYSIS	X	X	X		
-SERVES AS A RECORDER DURING PROCESS			X	X	X
-BRIEFS COMMANDER/STAFF		X	X		
COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE					
-ASSISTS CDR IN DEVELOPING GUIDANCE		X	X		
-ISSUES GUIDANCE	X				
-RECORDS/POSTS CDR'S GUIDANCE		X	X	X	X
COA DEVELOPMENT					
-PREPARES CHARTS				X	X
-SKETCHES COAs				X	X
-DEVELOPS COAs	X	X	X		
COA ANALYSIS					
-COLLECTS AND PREPARES TOOLS/CHARTS				X	X
-SERVES AS RECORDERS DURING WARGAME			X	X	X
-CONDUCTS WARGAME SESSION	X	X	X		
DECISION					
-MAKES RECOMMENDATION TO CDR		X	X		
-DECIDES	X				
-RECORDS/POSTS COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE		X	X	X	X
ORDERS PREP					
-WRITES ANNEXES		X	X		
-CONSOLIDATES ANNEXES			X	X	
-TYPES ORDER			X	X	X
-REPRODUCES ORDERS/GRAPHICS				X	X
-REVIEWS ORDER	X	X	X		
-APPROVES ORDER	X				

4.) As you practice the process, **request support from sister units to provide O/C coverage during the exercise.** Have the O/Cs conduct AARs to provide feedback throughout the planning process.

5.) When conducting these exercises, **set up your TOC to replicate a field environment.** Conducting the exercise in a garrison/office environment is much different from conducting the exercise in a field setting. This will also provide you the opportunity to exercise your TOC and make necessary adjustments.

6.) **Incorporate the planning process to produce plans and orders for as many of your**

day-to-day activities as possible. This should include developing orders for range operations, change-of-command ceremonies, gunnery, and squad/platoon/company lanes.

7.) While conducting your planning exercises, **identify what planning charts and tools you want to incorporate into your SOP.** Develop and refine your planning SOPs as you conduct your exercises. Refer to **CALL Newsletter 95-7, May 95,** ***Tactical Operations Center (TOC),*** as a starting point, and adjust as necessary.

8.) **Schedule your NCOs for the Battle Staff Course.** Upon graduation, stabilize their assignment in a staff position for as long as possible.

9.) **Use multiple warning orders.** As a starting point, you should issue three warning orders throughout the planning process. See Appendix A for ideas on when to issue warning orders. Send more warning orders if required. A verbal warning order sent now is worth more than a perfectly typed warning order sent one hour from now. Do not worry about sending typed warning orders. The amount of time required to prepare such warning orders often delays and hinders the intent of the warning order.

10.) As you prepare your quarterly training guidance, **prepare, issue, and include an operations order, or operations plan.** This order can then serve as a common scenario for subordinate units to use and exercise their decision-making process. They can use the same order to practice their MDMP as well as the abbreviated and accelerated forms. This technique not only provides subordinates a training opportunity, but also allows your staff to exercise the process and conduct all vertical and horizontal coordination as necessary. Include confirmation briefs, briefbacks, and rehearsals as well.

11.) **Use every available opportunity to conduct parallel planning with your higher headquarters.** Parallel planning can assist you in saving significant amounts of time, but, if not carefully managed, it can also cause you to waste time. As a general rule, never get ahead of your higher headquarters in the planning process. The majority of time spent conducting parallel planning should be spent developing the foundation of the plan (mission analysis: i.e., specified/implied tasks, terrain analysis and sketches, enemy doctrinal and situational templates etc.). Do not begin to develop and analyze COAs without specific guidance and approval from higher headquarters.

12.) As previously stated, most delays in the planning process are related to the S2 section. Often this is because the S2 is attempting to conduct the majority of the IPB process himself. **Dedicate time to train and refine skills for all subordinates in the S2 section.** Use this list as a starting point, and modify as necessary:

✔ Review threat doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

✔ Review terrain analysis techniques and procedures.

✔ Develop doctrinal, situational, and event templates.

✔ Develop event and TAI templates.

CHAPTER VII
Conclusion

There are no easy solutions to conducting the planning process when time is limited. The process is difficult even under the best of circumstances. However, all staffs must be capable of developing a tactically sound plan when conditions are less than optimal. Different circumstances require the commander and staff to apply different procedures as they conduct the planning process. This newsletter provides techniques and procedures to assist you in accomplishing this task. The techniques and procedures presented have proved useful to some units. There are no earth-shattering ideas that completely restructure the planning process. The MDMP is a sound and proven process; however, it must be modified to be effective when time is limited. ***Anticipation, organization, and prior preparation*** are the keys to success in a time-constrained environment. Applying the techniques and procedures presented in this document in an environment which stresses tough, realistic, and performance-oriented training will provide the foundation for success.✪

APPENDIX A
Example Timelines

This section provides example timelines for each of the planning techniques discussed in chapter 2-4. The timelines below present guidelines that a reasonably trained battalion and brigade staff, in today's environment (i.e., limited resources and personnel turbulence), should strive to accomplish during the planning process. Incorporate these timelines into your SOP, and adjust as necessary. If more time becomes available as you conduct any of the planning processes, use this additional time to develop and analyze your COAs. These times only focus on the planning process. They do not show all events that must be closely monitored by the staff. For additional information regarding timelines, see **CALL Newsletter No. 95-7, May 95, *Tactical Operations Center (TOC).***

DELIBERATE TECHNIQUE

RECEIVE MISSION	
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 1	
MISSION ANALYSIS	**1.75 HOURS**
MISSION ANALYSIS BRIEF	**.75 HOURS**
RECEIVE CDR'S GUIDANCE	**.5 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 2	
DEVELOP COAs/HASTY WARGAME	**2 HOURS**
COA ANALYSIS	**3 HOURS**
COA COMPARISON	**.75 HOUR**
COA DECISION BRIEF	**1 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 3	
ORDER PREPARATION	**2 HOURS**
ORDER APPROVAL	**1 HOUR**
ORDER REPRODUCTION	**2 HOURS**
ISSUE ORDER	**2 HOURS**
CONFIRMATION BRIEF TO CDR	**.5 HOUR**
BACKBRIEF	**.75 HOURS**
REHEARSAL	**2 HOURS**

ABBREVIATED TECHNIQUE

RECEIVE MISSION	
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 1	
MISSION ANALYSIS	**1 HOUR**
MISSION ANALYSIS BRIEF	**.5 HOUR**
RECEIVE CDR'S GUIDANCE	**.75 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 2	
DEVELOP COAs/HASTY WARGAME	**1.5 HOUR**
COA ANALYSIS	**1.5 HOUR**
COA COMPARISON	**.5 HOUR**
COA DECISION BRIEF	**.5 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 3	
ORDER PREPARATION	**1.5 HOUR**
ORDER APPROVAL	**.5 HOUR**
ORDER REPRODUCTION	**2 HOUR**
ISSUE ORDER	**1.5 HOUR**
CONFIRMATION BRIEF TO CDR	**.5 HOUR**
BACKBRIEF	**.75 HOUR**
REHEARSAL	**1.5 HOUR**

ACCELERATED TECHNIQUE

RECEIVE MISSION	
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 1	
MISSION ANALYSIS	**.5 HOUR**
MISSION ANALYSIS BRIEF	**.25 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 2	
DEVELOP COAs/HASTY WARGAME	**1 HOUR**
RECEIVE CDR'S GUIDANCE	**1 HOUR**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 3	
COA ANALYSIS	**1 HOUR**
COA COMPARISON	**N/A**
COA DECISION BRIEF	**N/A**
SEND WARNING ORDER NO. 4	
ORDER PREPARATION	**1 HOUR**
ORDER APPROVAL	**.5 HOUR**
ORDER REPRODUCTION	**1 HOUR**
ISSUE ORDER	**1 HOUR**
CONFIRMATION BRIEF TO CDR	**.5 HOUR**
BACKBRIEF	**.75 HOUR**
REHEARSAL	**1 HOUR**

APPENDIX B
Mission Analysis Checklist/Matrix

Prior to the mission analysis briefing, staff officers must know the status of subordinate units, limitations and capabilities of weapon systems, and understand the mission and intent of higher headquarters. The staff officer must bring with him to the mission analysis: technical knowledge, estimates, and historical data, as required. This appendix provides guidelines for the staff officer to consider as he prepares for the mission analysis brief. Once again, this list is not all-inclusive. **This checklist is designed to assist the staff officer in collecting the relevant facts needed to make the appropriate assumptions through the planning process.** It is generic in nature and should be reviewed and revised to meet your own needs. Additional considerations for each specific mission should be developed by each BOS representative.

ALL STAFF OFFICERS

1.) Specified and implied tasks.
2.) Mission-essential tasks.
3.) Limitations.
4.) Time considerations.

S2

Initial IPB including the following:
- ✔Define battlefield environment.
- ✔Define battlefield effects.
- ✔Evaluate the threat.
- ✔Determine threat COAs.
- ✔Enemy vulnerabilities.
- ✔Assets available.

S3

1.) Current combat power.
2.) Current situation of subordinate units and activities.
3.) Status of task organization.
4.) Assets available.
5.) Mission and intent two levels up.

FIRE SUPPORT OFFICER/ALO

1.) Assets available for upcoming mission.
2.) Aircraft sorties available.

ENGINEER OFFICER

1.) Engineer assets available.
2.) Capabilities with available assets. Numbers of fighting positions, number/size/density of minefields etc.

AIR DEFENSE OFFICER

1.) Assets available.
2.) Weapons control status.

S4

1.) Maintenance status.
2.) Forecasted vehicle/weapon status.
3.) Supply status of CL I, III, IV, V, IX.
4.) Transportation assets available.

S1

1.) Personnel status of organic and attached units.
2.) Forecasted personnel status.

MEDICAL OFFICER

Medical assets available.

SIGNAL OFFICER

Unit communications maintenance status.

APPENDIX C
Commander's Guidance

This appendix provides commanders a ready-to-use tool to assist them in developing their guidance. As previously discussed, the content of the commander's guidance may vary depending on the situation. This checklist is not designed to meet the needs of all situations, nor is it intended to provide commanders a tool to ensure they check each block during a CTC rotation. It is provided as a generic list of information commanders should consider as they develop their guidance. Use this list as a starting point, and modify it to suit your own needs. This list will be organized by a battlefield operating system.

INTELLIGENCE

1.) Enemy COAs to consider during the COA development and COA analysis phase of the planning process. This may be the enemy's most probable COA, most dangerous COA, or a combination of the two.
2.) Identify enemy's critical decision points and vulnerabilities.
3.) PIR (CCIR).
4.) Targeting guidance.
5.) Identify high-value targets.
6.) Desired enemy perception of friendly forces.
7.) Reconnaissance and surveillance guidance.

MANEUVER

1.) Initial intent:
- ✔Purpose of operation.
- ✔Method (phases/sequences).
- ✔Desired endstate.

2.) Concept of operations:
- ✔Decisive point.
- ✔Battlefield organization (close, deep, rear).
  - ✹Task/purpose
  - ✹Resources to be used for each

3.) COA development guidance:
- ✔Critical events.
- ✔Number of COAs to be developed.
- ✔Concepts to consider, or not consider.
  - ✹Formations to consider

- ✹Shaping of battlefield
- ✹Defeat mechanism
- ✹Main and supporting effort

✔Task organization.
✔Where/what risk to accept.
✔Task/purpose of subordinate units.
✔Reserve guidance (composition, mission, priorities, command and control measures).
✔Reconnaissance or counter-reconnaissance guidance.
- ✹Composition
- ✹Command and control measures

✔FFIR (CCIR)

4.) Deception Guidance, to include the following:
✔Amounts and types of resources to commit to the deception plan.
✔The desired action of the enemy, and who the target is.
✔How you intend to exploit the enemy action.
✔EEFI (CCIR)

5.) Reconnaissance and surveillance guidance and priorities.

FIRE SUPPORT

1.) High payoff targets:
✔Methods of engagement (maneuver, lethal, nonlethal)
✔Desired effects.

2.) Guidance for fires. (Note: The NTC has produced an instructional video on commander's guidance for fire support. See information at the back of this newsletter for instructions on how to order this video.)

3.) Observer plan.
4.) Employment of COLTs.
5.) Use of special munitions.
6.) Task and purpose of fires.
7.) Counterfires and use of radars.
8.) SEAD guidance.
9.) Critical friendly zones (CFZs) and call for fire zones (CFFZs).
10.) Fire support coordination measures.
11.) Synchronization and focus of fires with maneuver.

ENGINEER

1.) Mobility, counter-mobility, and survivability guidance. Priority of work and support.
2.) Guidance on employing friendly obstacles, and engineer assets.
3.) FASCAM and Volcano use and duration.
3.) Guidance on management of CL IV, V materials.
4.) Breaching guidance.

NBC

1.) Chemical reconnaissance assets.
2.) MOPP posture guidance.
3.) Decontamination guidance.
4.) Masking and unmasking guidance.
5.) Employment of smoke.

AIR DEFENSE

1.) Protection priorities.
2.) Positioning guidance.
3.) Weapon control status.

COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT

1.) Location of CSS assets.
2.) CSS priorities in terms of manning, fueling, fixing, arming, transporting, sustaining, and protecting.
3.) MEDEVAC treatment and evacuation guidance.
4.) Classes of supply.
5.) Controlled supply rates.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

1.) CP positioning guidance.
2.) Position of commander.
3.) Integration of re-trans assets or other communications equipment.
4.) LO guidance.
5.) Force protection measures.
6.) Timeline guidance.
7.) Type of order/rehearsal.